

KAIDO KUBRI

BREAKING  
THE  
SELF-ABUSE CYCLE

HOW TO STOP SHRINKING, START LIVING,  
AND COME BACK TO YOURSELF



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# **BREAKING THE SELF-ABUSE CYCLE**

## **HOW TO STOP SHRINKING, START LIVING, AND COME BACK TO YOURSELF**

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**“Self-abuse is what happens when we consistently act against our inner truth — often with good intentions, fear, or loyalty to old patterns.**

**It is not dramatic or obvious.**

**It is subtle, everyday self-harm: choosing safety instead of authenticity,  
choosing acceptance instead of inner alignment,  
choosing familiar pain instead of unfamiliar freedom.**

**We do not do it because we are weak or broken.**

**We do it because our unconscious ‘normal’ has been shaped by our past,  
our conditioning, and our personality patterns.**

**True inner freedom begins when we understand *why* we self-abuse,  
*how* we justify it, and *who* we become when we stop.”**

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# A Note From the Author

## *How This Book Was Created*

This book was created through a collaboration between human experience and artificial intelligence.

The ideas, emotional patterns, frameworks, observations, and practical insights in this book are based on **over 25 years of real-life work done by Kaido Kubri with himself and thousands of other people through trainings, coaching sessions, workshops, conversations, relationships, teams, families, and organizations.**

Artificial intelligence was used as a tool to help organize, structure, reflect, connect, and articulate these deeper patterns into written form.

The technology helped shape the language - but the **lived experiences, emotional truths, observations, and human understanding behind this book come from real life.**

To be clear - this book is not intended to function as a clinical, psychiatric, psychological, medical, or therapeutic authority, nor as a substitute for professional mental health care, diagnosis, treatment, or medical advice.

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- build upon it in any way you feel creates more understanding, healing, and human connection

**No permission is required.**

**The only request is simple - use it with honesty, humanity, and with good intentions towards yourself and towards others.**

— Kaido Kubri  
Estonia, 2026



# Table of Contents

**A Note From the Author**..... - 3 -  
    How This Book Was Created ..... - 3 -

**FOREWORD**..... - 6 -  
    What if the person hurting you the most... is you? ..... - 6 -

**SELF-ABUSE TYPOLOGY TEST** ..... - 7 -  
    Discover Your Primary Self-Abuse Pattern (based on DISC model) ..... - 7 -

**Introduction: Why This Book Needed to Be Written**..... - 9 -

**Chapter 1 - Normal vs Abuse: How We Adapt to Pain** ..... - 11 -  
    "It's normal, that's just the way my life is" ..... - 11 -

**Chapter 2 - Why Good People Hurt Themselves**..... - 17 -  
    The better the person, the more likely they are to self-abuse. .... - 17 -

**Chapter 3 - Three Balances as Roots of Self-Abuse**..... - 23 -  
    Real balance is dynamic, alive and always shifting ..... - 23 -

**Chapter 4 - The Four Forms of Self-Abuse** ..... - 29 -  
    Self-abuse doesn't look dramatic and it rarely looks extreme. .... - 29 -

**Chapter 5 - Using masks as Self-Abuse** ..... - 35 -  
    Masks begin as protection and adaptation ..... - 35 -

**Chapter 6 - The Voice That Sounds Like You**..... - 41 -  
    Every person, who struggles with self-abuse, has an internal enemy..... - 41 -

**Chapter 7 - Noticing the Micro-Moment You Begin to Betray Yourself**..... - 48 -  
    Self-abuse doesn't begin with big decisions, it begins with tiny moments. .... - 48 -

**Chapter 8 - How Self-Abuse Shows Up in Relationships** ..... - 55 -  
    The Invisible Patterns That Shape Love, Conflict, and Connection ..... - 55 -

**Chapter 9 - The Body's Warning Signals** ..... - 61 -  
    The Somatic Map of Self-Abuse ..... - 61 -

**Chapter 10 - Why We Don't Trust Ourselves**..... - 68 -  
    Rebuilding Inner Authority ..... - 68 -

**Chapter 11 - The Turning Point: The First Time You Choose Yourself**..... - 74 -  
    Every healing journey has a before and an after ..... - 74 -

**Chapter 12 - Rewriting the Rules** ..... - 80 -  
    How to Stop Abandoning Yourself in Real Time ..... - 80 -

**Chapter 13 - The Emotional Immune System** ..... - 86 -  
    How Self-Respect Protects You ..... - 86 -

**Chapter 14 - The New You: Identity After Self-Abandonment Ends** ..... - 92 -  
    Once you stop abandoning yourself, you become someone different..... - 92 -

**Chapter 15 - The Self-Respect Lifestyle**..... - 99 -  
    Daily Habits That Keep You Aligned ..... - 99 -

**Chapter 16 - Relationships After Self-Abandonment**..... - 105 -  
    Your Relationship Dynamics Fundamentally Change ..... - 105 -



**Chapter 17 - The Integrated Life ..... - 113 -**  
Work, Creativity, and Purpose from Alignment ..... - 113 -

**Chapter 18 - The End of Self-Abuse ..... - 121 -**  
What Freedom Actually Feels Like ..... - 121 -

**Chapter 19 - Returning to Your Light ..... - 128 -**  
The Invitation to a Fully Lived Life ..... - 128 -

**Chapter 20 - The Afterlife of Healing..... - 135 -**  
Who You Become in the Years That Follow..... - 135 -

**Chapter 21 - A Life That Doesn't Need Healing..... - 141 -**  
Living Beyond the Wound Story..... - 141 -

**Chapter 22 - The Architecture of Wholeness..... - 148 -**  
Wholeness is not perfection, it's coherence ..... - 148 -

**Chapter 23 - Becoming the Author of Your Life ..... - 155 -**  
The Final Invitation ..... - 155 -

**Chapter 24 - The Closing Letter..... - 163 -**  
A Personal Message to the Reader ..... - 163 -

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## FOREWORD

### *What if the person hurting you the most... is you?*

This book reveals the **silent epidemic of self-abuse** — the subtle, well-intentioned ways we betray our truth, exhaust ourselves, silence our desires, and shrink our light.

We don't do it because we are broken.

We do it because we were trained to survive, to fit in, to please, to be “good.”

And because our personality patterns — D, I, S, and C — show us different versions of “normal” that quietly destroy us from within.

Through simple models, emotional actionable insights and highly practical suggestions this book helps you to:

- Recognize the exact ways your type self-abuses
- See the masks you wear and the inner voice that keeps you small
- Untangle the guilt, fear, and conditioning beneath your choices
- Break out of the unconscious loops that sabotage your happiness
- Reclaim your truth, your light, and the courage to live fully

This book is a guide, a mirror, a wake-up call, and an invitation.

**This book invites you to stop hurting yourself and start honouring yourself.**

**To live as the person you truly are — no more hiding, no more shrinking and no more self-abuse.**

### **How to read this book?**

It is recommended, that you read this book intuitively, **jumping to the Chapter, that resonates with you the most.**

You don't need to worry, that you will miss anything - all important parts are repeated several times through different angles and view-points.

There will be Chapters, that you will fly through in minutes - and there will be Chapters, that will make you think, reflect and discuss for days, weeks and months - both ways are part of the journey for you to enjoy.

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## SELF-ABUSE TYPOLOGY TEST

### *Discover Your Primary Self-Abuse Pattern (based on DISC model)*

Most people don't notice how they hurt themselves.  
This test will help you identify *how* you self-abuse and *why* it feels normal to you.

Read each statement and rate how true it feels for you most of the time:

- 1 = Never true**
- 2 = Rarely true**
- 3 = Sometimes true**
- 4 = Often true**
- 5 = Always true**

Write your score next to each item.

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### **SECTION D — The Pressure of Over-Strength**

*How you self-abuse through force, control, and over-responsibility.*

1. I push myself even when my body or emotions clearly say “stop.”
2. I tend to handle everything alone, even when help is available.
3. Slowing down or resting makes me feel guilty or weak.
4. I judge myself for not being productive enough.
5. I stay in control so others don't see my vulnerability.
6. I take on more responsibility than is healthy for me.
7. When I feel emotional pain, I respond by pushing myself harder.

**D Total:** \_\_\_\_\_

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### **SECTION I — The Avoidance of Discomfort**

*How you self-abuse by escaping truth and avoiding emotional depth.*

8. When I feel discomfort, I distract myself quickly.
9. I avoid deep emotional conversations, even with myself.
10. I jump into new ideas or experiences to escape difficult feelings.
11. I hide sadness or fear behind humour or positivity.
12. I promise more than I can consistently follow through on.
13. Silence or stillness makes me uneasy.
14. I tell myself “It's fine” even when it isn't.

**I Total:** \_\_\_\_\_

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## SECTION S — The Disappearing Self

*How you self-abuse by sacrificing yourself for peace, harmony, or others' needs.*

- 15. I put others' needs first, even when it hurts me.
- 16. I avoid conflict by staying silent about my true feelings.
- 17. I feel guilty when I prioritise myself.
- 18. I agree to things I don't actually want to do.
- 19. I absorb other people's emotions and problems.
- 20. I stay in situations longer than I should to avoid upsetting anyone.
- 21. I feel responsible for keeping peace at home or work.

**S Total:** \_\_\_\_\_

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## SECTION C — The Perfection Punishment Loop

*How you self-abuse through judgment, overthinking, and impossible standards.*

- 22. I judge myself harshly for mistakes or imperfections.
- 23. I overthink decisions until I become stuck.
- 24. I replay past errors and feel shame or regret.
- 25. I feel anxious when I can't do something "properly."
- 26. I delay starting things because I fear doing them wrong.
- 27. I hold myself to standards I would never expect of others.
- 28. I feel I must earn the right to rest or relax.

**C Total:** \_\_\_\_\_

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## INTERPRETING YOUR SCORES

Your **highest total** is your **primary self-abuse style**.

Your second-highest total is your **secondary pattern**.

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### If D is highest — The Pressure Pattern

You self-abuse through force, pushing, over-strength, control, and self-demand.  
You don't allow yourself softness, rest, or support.

### If I is highest — The Escape Pattern

You self-abuse by avoiding truth, escaping discomfort, and staying on the surface instead of facing what hurts.

### If S is highest — The Disappearance Pattern

You self-abuse by shrinking yourself, putting others first, and abandoning your own needs for harmony.

### If C is highest — The Punishment Pattern

You self-abuse by overthinking, judging yourself harshly, and holding impossible standards.

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## What to Do Next

As you go through the book, you will find a detailed explanations of your pattern from different angles, how it developed, and how to break free.

Enjoy the journey!



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## Introduction: Why This Book Needed to Be Written

Most people think abuse is something that happens *from the outside*.

A parent, a partner, a boss, a society.

Someone crosses a line, someone hurts us, someone takes away something we needed.

But very few people see the other side of the story:

**We also abuse ourselves.**

**Quietly.**

**Consistently.**

**Even with the best intentions.**

And often, the way we treat ourselves is far more damaging than anything others could ever do to us from outside.

**Self-abuse is not dramatic.**

It is rarely loud.

It is almost never violent.

It looks like “being responsible.”

It looks like “trying harder.”

It looks like “being a good person.”

It looks like “not wanting to burden anyone.”

It looks like “keeping things together.”

But behind these good intentions lives a truth many of us never learned to name:

**We often hurt ourselves in the name of being good.**

We betray ourselves to be loved.

We silence ourselves to keep peace.

We push ourselves to avoid guilt.

We shrink ourselves to avoid conflict.

We override our boundaries so we don't disappoint anyone.

And because this seems normal...

we don't see it as abuse.

But it is.

**Self-abuse is every moment where our truth whispers “no” and we still force ourselves to say “yes.”**

**It is every moment where our body says “rest” and we still push ourselves to continue.**

**It is every moment where our heart says “this is not your path” and we still walk it because someone once told us we should.**



Most of us don't do this consciously.  
We learned it.

From our childhood roles.  
From our family expectations.  
From school.  
From culture.  
From relationships.  
And from our personality — especially from what we call “normal.”

In my first book, I explained how the DISC model reveals the “operating system” behind our behaviour.

In this book, we take it deeper based on the real work, that I have done for 25 years - with myself, with individuals (over 3000 one-on-one sessions), couples, families, with high-performing teams from both public and private sectors.

**Each DISC type has its own version of self-abuse:**

- **D** pushes themselves until they break because strength feels safer than vulnerability.
- **I** avoids their truth because positivity feels safer than honesty.
- **S** sacrifices themselves because harmony feels safer than equality.
- **C** punishes themselves because perfection feels safer than simply being human.

**We do not self-abuse because we are weak.**

**We do it because it is familiar.**

Because it once helped us survive.  
Because it kept us accepted.  
Because it made sense at a time when we didn't have better tools.

This book is not written to judge you.  
It is written to free you.

To help you see the subtle ways you abandon yourself.  
To help you understand the deeper patterns that shape them.  
To help you reconnect with the parts of you that have been waiting for a long time.  
And to guide you back to your truth, your voice, and your light.

Every chapter is a mirror.  
Some mirrors will be soft.  
Some will be uncomfortable.  
All will be honest.

Because true freedom begins with one simple, painful, liberating moment.

**When you finally realize that you have been hurting yourself — and you decide not to do it anymore.**

Welcome.  
This book will not change who you are.  
It will bring you back to who you have always been.



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## Chapter 1 - Normal vs Abuse: How We Adapt to Pain

*"It's normal, that's just the way my life is"*

Most people don't notice when a boundary is crossed inside themselves.  
Not because they are ignorant.  
Not because they are weak.

But because they have learned to call it something else:  
**"Normal."**

Human beings are extraordinary at adaptation.

We can adapt to almost anything:

- stress
- loneliness
- overwork
- emotional neglect
- guilt
- pressure
- silence
- unrealistic expectations
- disrespect
- chaos
- constant giving
- constant smiling
- never being enough

If something happens often enough, early enough, or long enough, the nervous system begins to treat it as:

**"This is just how life works."**

**"This is who I need to be."**

**"This is normal."**

And once something becomes normal,  
we stop questioning it.

That is how self-abuse begins.

Not with violence.  
Not with cruelty.  
But with **adaptation**.



## The Birth of “Normal”

No one consciously decides:

- “I will ignore my needs.”
- “I will always say yes.”
- “I will stay silent.”
- “I will carry everything alone.”
- “I will make myself small.”
- “I will never rest.”
- “I will pretend I’m okay.”
- “I will push myself until I break.”

**These patterns happen because, at some point, they were useful.**

They helped you to:

- avoid conflict,
- avoid punishment,
- get approval,
- keep peace,
- stay loved,
- feel safe,
- survive.

The problem is that what protects you in childhood destroys you in adulthood.

**The habits that once kept you safe are now the habits that keep you stuck.**

And the more familiar they feel, the harder they are to recognize.

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## We Adapt to Pain Faster Than We Adapt to Freedom

This is the sad and beautiful truth:

**your mind and nervous system are designed for *survival*, not happiness.**

**Pain that is predictable is easier for the brain to handle than freedom that is unfamiliar.**

That is why:

- Staying in a stressful job feels easier than quitting.
- Being over-responsible feels safer than setting boundaries.
- Pleasing others feels easier than disappointing them.
- Keeping quiet feels safer than speaking your truth.
- Staying busy feels easier than slowing down and feeling.
- Being “the strong one” feels safer than asking for help.
- Staying small feels easier than being seen.

**Freedom is frightening when you have lived your whole life in adaptation.**



You might even feel physical discomfort when trying to:

- say no
- rest
- express your needs
- be seen
- receive help
- show vulnerability
- follow your intuition
- honour your truth

Your body will react as if you are doing something wrong even when you're finally doing something right.

**This is why escaping self-abuse feels uncomfortable at first: you are breaking the rules you once created for survival.**

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## **The DISC Version of “Normal”**

Each DISC type internalizes a different version of normal — a version that quietly shapes how they self-abuse.

### **D — Normal is being strong.**

Strength becomes identity.  
Softness feels dangerous.  
Vulnerability feels like failure.  
Rest feels like weakness.

Self-abuse becomes over-pushing, over-controlling, or over-responsibility.

### **I — Normal is being positive.**

Emotional discomfort feels dangerous.  
Truth feels heavy.  
Silence feels scary.

Self-abuse becomes avoidance, distraction, or emotional denial.

### **S — Normal is keeping peace.**

Conflict feels dangerous.  
Disapproval feels unbearable.  
Needs feel selfish.

Self-abuse becomes self-erasure, over-giving, or staying in harmful situations.



## **C — Normal is being correct.**

Mistakes feel dangerous.  
Imperfection feels shameful.  
Emotion feels unpredictable.

Self-abuse becomes perfectionism, inner judgment, and paralysis.

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## **Why “Normal” Is the Most Dangerous Word in Self-Development**

People rarely question “normal.”

In relationships, workplaces, cultures, and families, normal becomes:

- how we talk,
- how we argue,
- how we love,
- how we work,
- how we express emotion,
- how we treat ourselves,
- how we treat others.

**Normal is invisible.**

**And because it’s invisible, self-abuse hides inside it perfectly.**

A person who has normalized self-abuse will say:

- “It’s fine, I can handle it.”
- “It’s not that bad.”
- “Other people have it worse.”
- “I don’t want to make a fuss.”
- “I don’t want to disappoint anyone.”
- “It’s easier if I just do it.”
- “I’ll rest when I finish this.”
- “I should be stronger.”
- “I should be happier.”
- “I should be grateful.”

These are not neutral statements.

**They are *adaptations*.**

They are evidence of a person who has learned to treat themselves as second-class — sometimes without ever noticing.

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## The Seduction of Familiar Pain

**Pain has a strange quality:  
if you know it well, it becomes comforting.**

You may not like it.  
You may not want it.  
But you understand it.

**Familiar pain feels safer than unfamiliar peace.**

That is why:

- People stay in jobs they hate.
- People stay quiet in relationships that hurt them.
- People stay in roles that no longer fit.
- People keep pushing themselves even when they feel broken.
- People stay emotionally small even when they long to expand.

**The fear of change is often greater than the pain of staying the same.**

This is the psychological root of self-abuse: **we return to what is familiar, even if it hurts.**

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## How to Recognize When “Normal” Has Become Abuse

There are three signs:

**1. Your body says no, but your behaviour says yes.**

Tension, exhaustion, anxiety, heaviness, numbness.

**2. You feel emotionally small.**

Like your truth is shrinking inside you.

**3. You live by rules you never consciously chose.**

“I should...”  
“I must...”  
“I can’t...”  
“I’m not allowed to...”

These rules are old survival strategies, not truth.

When your normal becomes a set of unspoken rules that control you, you are no longer living — you are managing yourself.

**And every time you manage yourself instead of being yourself, self-abuse grows stronger.**



## **The Beginning of Change: Question Your “Normal”**

Nothing changes until you do one simple, courageous thing:  
**You start to question the things you automatically accept.**

You begin to ask:

- Is this actually good for me?
- Who taught me this?
- Is this mine, or is this inherited?
- What if I don't want this anymore?
- What part of me is trying to protect me?
- What would I choose if I wasn't afraid?
- What would feel true if I trusted myself?

This is the beginning of freedom.

**Self-abuse cannot survive clarity.**

**It cannot survive honesty.**

It cannot survive a person who finally sees themselves with compassion.

**When you question your normal, you begin to remember who you were before you adapted yourself out of existence.**

And that is where healing begins.

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# THIS ISN'T THE END. IT'S THE BEGINNING OF YOU.

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You were never meant to live a life of silent self-betrayal.  
You were meant for wholeness, connection, freedom,  
and a love that begins with you.

Breaking the Self-Abuse Cycle is not just a book—  
it's a return to your truth, your power,  
and your inner authority.

You don't have to keep abandoning yourself  
to be accepted, loved, or safe.

You don't have to earn your worth.

You only have to choose yourself—again and again—  
until it becomes your new way of life.

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**YOU ARE NOT BEHIND.  
YOU ARE NOT TOO LATE.  
YOU ARE JUST BEGINNING.**

This book is your guide, your mirror,  
and your reminder that true freedom  
is not found out there—it's found  
when you come back to yourself.

*Welcome home.*